

One-half of the manufacturing jobs in Columbus County are related to the extensive woodlands and forests. Although employment in lumber and wood products industries are trending downward, pulp and paper manufacturing has shown a gain due to the establishment of the huge Reigel Carolina Paper Corporation facility at Reigelwood. The apparel and textile industries, which employ almost one-fourth of the workers in manufacturing, have also experienced rapid growth since 1950.

Total employment in the basic industries--agriculture and manufacturing--gained from 1930 through 1950, but declined during the 1950 and 1960 decade. The net results was an over-all loss of 809 basic industry jobs between 1930 and 1960.¹ Despite the losses of basic employment, the number of workers in nonbasic industries almost trippled during this 30 year period (from 2,353 in 1930 to 6,554 in 1960).

Commerce and professional services have been the principal areas in which nonbasic employment has increased. The number of persons in professional services advanced 46 percent during the 1950 to 1960 decade. No other nonbasic industry experienced a larger gain (Table 15).

With the exception of agriculture and durable manufacturing, all major industry groups in Columbus County experienced growth during the past decade. Nevertheless, losses in agriculture and durable manufacturing offset gains in the older industries and resulted in a total employment decline of 9.3 percent.

Many people have moved out of Columbus County due to a lack of employment opportunities. This exodus of population will probably continue unless new growth industries are found to replace the rapidly dwindling farm occupations.

¹/ Basic industries bring dollars into a locality by exporting products to other areas.